

Women's Language Features Used by Taylor Swift in the 2015 Grammy Interview Video

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Abstract

This study entitled Women's Language Features Used by Taylor Swift in Grammy Interview Video 2015 is aimed to identify women's language features and to analyze the language function used by Taylor Swift. All of the data were taken from the utterances delivered by Taylor Swift. The transcribe of the video were made by the author. Documentation method and note-taking were applied in collecting the data. In analyzing the data, Mixed-method was applied using Lakoff (2004) and the theory about language function proposed by Judy Pierson (1985) as supporting theory. As a result, there are 95 features of women's language. Those were lexical hedges or filler, intensifier, hypercorrected grammar, super polite form, avoidance of strong swear words, and emphatic stress. The most dominant features occur in her utterance is intensifier. She used those features because she wanted to deeply emphasize or strengthen her utterances to attract the audience's and the presenter's attention. Not all types of women's language features were used by her. Taylor Swift did not use four kinds of features such as tag questions, rising intonation on declarative, empty adjectives and precise color terms. Based on the findings of the features, there were three language features element in her utterances, such as to soften an utterance, to start a discussion and to express feelings or opinions. The language function element such as to express uncertainty and to get response were not found in her utterances. Each of the women's language feature have one language function.

Abstrak

Penelitian yang berjudul Fitur Bahasa Wanita yang Digunakan Taylor Swift dalam Video Wawancara Grammy 2015 ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi fitur bahasa wanita dan menganalisis fungsi bahasa yang digunakan oleh Taylor Swift. Semua data diambil dari tuturan yang disampaikan oleh Taylor Swift. Transkrip video dibuat oleh penulis. Metode dokumentasi dan pencatatan diterapkan dalam pengumpulan data. Dalam menganalisis data, metode Campuran diterapkan dengan menggunakan Lakoff (2004) dan teori tentang fungsi bahasa yang dikemukakan oleh Judy Pierson (1985) sebagai teori pendukung. Hasilnya, ada 95 fitur bahasa wanita. Itu adalah lexical hedges atau filler, intensifier, hypercorrected grammar, bentuk super sopan, menghindari kata-kata makian yang kuat, dan tekanan empatik. Ciri yang paling dominan terjadi dalam tuturannya adalah intensifier. Dia menggunakan fitur-fitur itu karena dia ingin menekankan atau memperkuat ucapannya untuk menarik perhatian audiens dan presenter. Tidak semua jenis fitur bahasa wanita digunakan olehnya. Taylor Swift tidak menggunakan empat jenis fitur seperti pertanyaan tag, intonasi naik pada deklaratif, kata sifat kosong dan istilah warna yang tepat. Berdasarkan temuan ciri-ciri tersebut, terdapat tiga unsur ciri kebahasaan dalam tuturannya, yaitu untuk melunakkan suatu tuturan, untuk memulai suatu diskusi dan untuk mengungkapkan perasaan atau pendapat. Unsur-unsur fungsi bahasa seperti untuk mengungkapkan ketidakpastian dan untuk mendapatkan tanggapan tidak ditemukan dalam tuturannya. Setiap fitur bahasa wanita memiliki satu fungsi bahasa.

BACKGROUND OF STUDY

According to Wardhaugh and Fuller (2006:1), A language is what the members of particular society speaks. In society, language plays a unique role; furthermore, language has always served as a bridge between people, and they require it in order to communicate with one another. Related to language, Gender is one of the characteristics of sociolinguistics. Gender refers to how men and women are assigned roles and

responsibilities in a certain society. In their daily lives, men and women talk in different ways. The relationship between language and society was taught to us through sociolinguistics. It can describe men and women based on their looks, behavior, and language. Gender has been used as an explanation for many types of linguistic variance, including vocabulary innovation (e.g., pronunciation, grammar, and communication style), implying that gender or both sexes have a

different method to convey anything in this environment. The gender of a person is often reflected in their language. This is supported by Lakoff's theory of woman language.

Women's language is a fascinating subject to research as their speech differs from men's. The differences in how men and women use language can be traced back to the language's structure, societal norms, or the people who use it. There are ten basic types of women's language features that are offered by Lakoff. Lexical hedge or filler, Tag question, Rising intonation on declarative, Empty adjectives, Precise color term, Intensifiers, Hypercorrected grammar, Super polite forms, Avoiding strong swear words, and Emphatic stress are the ten basic types of women's language features by Lakoff. Women's language can be seen in a lot of settings, one of which is in the scene of an interview. In this case Taylor Swift's Grammy Interview Video and Lakoff's Woman's language theory are chosen. First, almost all of the woman's language features can be found in this video and because of this video is an interview video makes the data more realistic compare to the other art works such as movie.

METHOD

A research method is a procedure and technique used to find, select, process, and analyse data in order to answer the problems addressed in this study. This study used a mixed-methods approach. The term "mixed-method" refers to the use of both qualitative and quantitative methods. Each method's limitations and strengths are combined and extended in order to gain a better grasp of the study problem. Rather of relying solely on itself, this mixing strategy incorporated a more sophisticated understanding (Creswell 2008)

Data Source

The data source for this study was just the primary data source. This is because the data in this study were the original data source which collected firsthand by the researcher. The primary data source for this study was Grammy Pro official website. Grammy Pro is the official website for Grammy award. Here the interview video of Taylor Swift was released in 2015. This video was discussed about all of the Taylor Swift's album in 2015 and earlier. The duration of the video is 38 minutes.

Method and Technique of Collecting Data

Documentation method was applied in collecting the data in this study. In order to obtain accurate and detail data, note-taking technique was applied in collecting the data. There were several steps to collect the data. First, the video was downloaded. Second, in the video was watched carefully in term of getting the proper data, so the author did not miss some information. Third, finding the features of the women's language by reading the transcript. Finally, the 10 elements given by Lakoff were used to classify Taylor Swift's utterances including women's language features (2004).

Method and Technique of Analysing Data

The mixed technique was used to analyze all of the data. A mixed-method study, according to Creswell and Clark (2011), is one in which quantitative and qualitative data are combined to provide a better understanding of research problems than one methodology alone. From the collected data, this study used a qualitative method to provide a complete interpretation and explanation of the many types of women's language features and language functions. The data then were quantitatively evaluated, with simple descriptive statics being used to tally how many times specific language features appeared in the sample (Gries, 2009). The data was analyzed using the steps outlined including: 1) Classifying the utterances of Taylor Swift that contained women's language features based on the ten features proposed by Lakoff (2004); 2) Elaborating the selected data that represented each type of women's language feature found; 3) Calculating the frequency distribution of Taylor Swift's language features in the form of table using the formula as shown below:

$$[P = \frac{F}{N} \times 100\%]$$

P = the percentage

F = the frequency

N = The total number

(Sugiyono, 2013, page 95)

Method and Technique of Presenting Data

A combination of formal and informal methods was used to provide the data analysis. In order to provide explanations of the data in the form of paragraphs, the informal method was used which is explained by sentences in details. The

formal technique was used to create a table with figures of women's language that was found. To make sorting the analysis easier, the selected data was first provided in table form with numbers, utterance, and context. Second, to describe the context of the dialogue and Taylor Swift's linguistic features, the selected data was presented in an informal manner in the form of paragraphs. Third, each selected sample's data was accompanied with an analysis of the language function. Finally, the table shows the number and percentage of women's language features used by Taylor Swift.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

There are 6 out of 10 of women's language features found in Taylor Swift Grammy Interview Video 2015. The analysis can be presented as follow:

Data 1 Lexical hedges or filler

No	Utterance	Context
1.	Oh, hey, guys. <i>Well</i> , that was really nice.	Taylor Swift welcoming everyone on the show.

The dialogue began when the presenter welcoming Taylor Swift and the audience give her a big applause. She walked in and said "oh hey guys. Well, that was really nice" and then she sat. This implied how she welcomed everyone there. as shown on the table above, the word *Well* is the highlight in this utterance because this word is classified as **Lexical hedges or filler**. This word usually used by someone to give a breath gap or give someone a gap to think about the upcoming word that they will say. The word *Well* can be added or removed without changing the meaning of the sentence, that is why this word is called Lexical hedges or filler. Here Taylor Swift utilized the word *Well* to give her a break before saying the following words.

Data 2 Intensifier

No	Utterances	Context
1.	I'm <i>so</i> excited. You guys are here. I'm honored that you wanna be here to talk about how we made 1989. I feel like before we talk about how we made 1989.	Taylor Swift is welcoming everyone on the show

The dialogue began when Taylor Swift welcomed everyone on the studio to discuss about how she and her demo producer made the 1989 album. In this utterance, the word *so* is highlighted because this word is classified as Intensifier. The word *so* usually used to strengthen word that have a distinct meaning. Taylor Swift utilized the word *So* to strengthen the word exited. This is because she wanted to strengthen the word "exited", which she is really excited to discuss about how she and her demo producer made the album 1989 to the audience.

Data 3 Hypercorrected grammar

No	Utterance	Context
1	<i>And I wanted to do well in the writing session so I emailed him a lot of songs and one of them was this song called I know places.</i>	Taylor Swift introduced her producer music for the album, Ryan Tetter. She emailed him a lot of songs and one of them was <i>I know places</i>

The dialogue began when Taylor Swift mention and introduce her producer for her album, Ryan Tetter. Taylor talked that she had emailed him with a lot of songs and one of them was *I know places*. *I know places* is one of the 1989 album. The whole sentence in this utterance above is highlighted because the sentence is classified as hypercorrected grammar. Hypercorrected grammar is more commonly utilize by women because women tend to adopt the standard forms of language compare to men that usually utilize the vernacular. In this case, Taylor used the consistent grammar and make the sentence formal. In this sentence also did not find any word abbreviation, which make this sentence more formal than other sentence that she said in this interview.

Data 4 Super polite form

No	Utterances	Context
1.	Well, the show's actually like, we're fine. It's fine. She's British. I was just like, <i>please</i> sing on it, <i>please</i> sing on it, <i>please</i> sing on it. So, she did all these, these image and heap background vocals which	Taylor Swift was showing the video of Shellback in making the chorus of her song and she asked Shellback to sing it and Shellback did it.

The dialogue above began when Taylor Swift showed the video of Shellback in making chorus of her song. Taylor Swift asked Shellback to sing the song and she did. In the dialogue above, the word *please* is highlighted because this word is classified as super polite form. Super polite form is the application of women selecting more polite utterances while speaking. The word *please* is used by Taylor Swift to sound less demanding while she is requesting something from someone.

Data 5 Emphatic stress

No	Utterances	Context
2.	And I was like <i>but this guy is so great</i> and he's like but has he made an album before? I was like, <i>technically no</i> . But	Taylor Swift talked about Nathan Chapman who help her to make the album.

This dialogue began when Taylor Swift talked about Nathan Chapman who was a demo producer that helped her made the album. The utterance "*but this guy is so great*" and "*technically no*" can be classified as Emphatic Stress. Taylor Swift used emphatic stress frequently in her utterances to emphasize the main idea or word that she wanted to focus on. She raised the intonation in that phrase to convey her statement that need to be paid more attention.

Data 6 Avoidance of strong swear words

No	Utterances	Context
1.	And you'll hear Max go, <i>oh my god</i> , I love it, that's so annoying, they're all gonna kill you. I had the idea for the chorus and I had the hook.	Taylor Swift talked about how she and Max Martin made the song entitle Blank Space and she play the original voice memo of that song.

The dialogue began when Taylor Swift talked about how she and Max Martin made the song entitle Blank Space. She played the original voice memo of that song and Max Martin said that she loved the idea of the song. The phrase "*oh my God*" is highlighted because this phrase is classified as Avoidance of Strong Swear Words. It is proven when Taylor used the phrase "*oh my God*" instead of using stronger swear words such as "*damn*" or "*shit*". Taylor Swift used the phrase

to emphasize or strengthen the expression about her opinion, in this case the idea of the song.

The frequency of women's language features used by Taylor Swift

No	Features	Number of Features	Frequency
1.	Lexical Hedges or Fillers	20	21,05%
2.	Tag Questions	-	-
3.	Rising Intonation on Declarative	-	-
4.	Empty Adjectives	-	-
5.	Precise Colour Terms	-	-
6.	Intensifiers	63	66,3%
7.	Hypercorrected Grammar	2	1,05%
8.	Super Polite Forms	1	1,05%
9.	Avoidance of Strong Swear Word	1	1,05%
10.	Emphatic Stress	9	9,5%
Total			100%

The table above showed the result of women's language features used by Taylor Swift in Grammy Interview Video 2015. The total number of features found in her utterance were 95 features. Taylor Swift used six out of ten women's language features. They consisted of lexical hedges or filler (20,83%), intensifier (65,62%), hypercorrected grammar (2,08%), super polite form (1,05%), avoidance of strong swear Words (1,05%) and emphatic stress (9,37%). Other features such as tag question, rising intonation on declarative, empty adjectives and precise color terms were not found in her utterances.

Based on the table above, it could be identified that Intensifiers were the most frequent features used by Taylor Swift's utterances. The use of Intensifiers related with the situation and the conversation context. Taylor Swift used this feature to strengthen or emphasize her utterances deeply to attract the audience's and the presenter's attention. In this interview, Taylor Swift discussed about Taylor Swift's new album at that time that won the Album of The Year and Best Pop Vocal Album. She also discussed about how she made the album and the story behind the album. Beside the 1989 album, she also discussed about all of her previous album and the story behind it. Through the

discussion, the explanation given by Taylor Swift, she tried to focus and provide a detail information about her album and the story behind it by emphasizing and reinforcing it so that the audience and the presenter understand it.

However, during the interview, not all of the types of women's language features used by Taylor Swift. The features such as tag questions, rising intonation on declaratives, empty adjectives and precise color terms were not found in her utterance. She did not use the tag question which usually uses as an expression that is found at the end of the sentence to give emphasis, get approval or confirm information because she was confident and sure about her statement. Rising intonation on declaratives were not found in her utterance because there was no intonation indicating that she was asking the statement as a question during the interview. She was not turning her statement into a question as preface to her next statement. Based on the context, Taylor Swift was assertive and confident with what she said. So, she did not use the rising intonation on declaratives to emphasize her statement. The other features such as the usage of precise color terms and empty adjectives also were not found in her utterance. This is because there was no discussion that explain something which is described in color based on the topic. There is no vocabulary selection for mentioning color. She also was not expressing her sentiments about something in a specific situation. The major topic of the interview was about her *1989* album, the previous albums and the story behind the albums.

CONCLUSION

Based on the foregoing analysis, the conclusion in this study can be described by several points. According to the findings, there are six types of women's language features found based on the theory of Lakoff (2004). The six types are lexical hedges or filler (20,835%), intensifier (65,625%), hypercorrected grammar (2,083%), super polite form (1,041%), avoidance of strong swear word (1,041%), and emphatic stress (9,375%). Intensifiers are the most dominant features that is used by Taylor Swift in this interview. The usage of intensifiers was related with the situation and the context of the conversation. She used those features to emphasize or strengthen her utterances to attract the presenter's and the audience's attention. In

addition, not all the types of women's language were used by Taylor Swift. Taylor Swift did not use four types of women's language feature such as tag questions, rising intonation on declarative, empty adjective and precise color term.

Taylor Swift did not use tag questions feature because she did not feel that she wanted to state something that she was unsure about it. She did not use rising intonation on declaratives feature because there was no intonation indicating that she was asking the statement as a question during the interview. She also did not used empty adjectives because she was not expressing her sentiments about something in certain situation. And last, precise color terms feature also did not used by her because there is no discussion of concept that explain something in color based.

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